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ABSTRACT

The findings of a study of language and language education policy in each of the three independent nations of Comoros, Mauritius, and the Seychelles are reported in this book. Each country is discussed separately, focusing on the linguistic and educational history, the existing educational system, and current language policies and programs. Program types covered include elementary and secondary instruction, teacher education programs, adult functional literacy courses, and language instruction by radio. A concluding chapter analyzes the programs in terms of their pedagogical development and usefulness and examines the areas of language education that still need to be addressed. (MSE)

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LANGUAGE TEACHING IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

Policy and Pedagogy in Three Developing Nations

Edmun B. Richmond

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LANGUAGE TEACHING IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

Policy and Pedagogy in Three Developing Nations

A Study of the Formation of National Language Policies and Related Educational Programs in the Comoros, Mauritius, and Seychelles

Edmun B. Richmond

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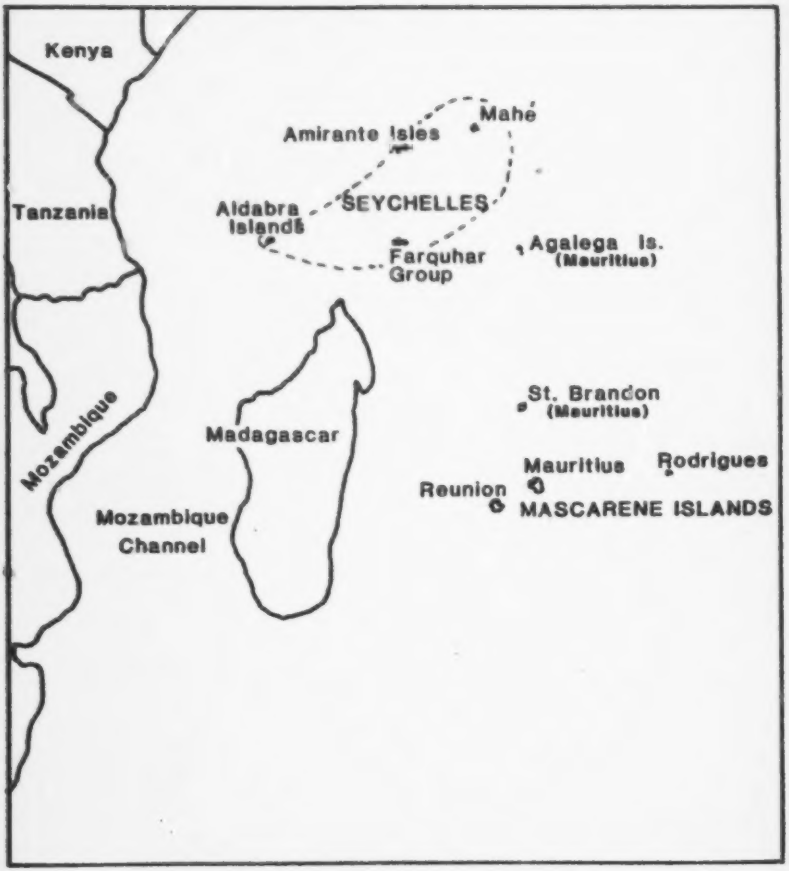
INTRODUCTION

Off the east coast of Africa, in the Indian Ocean, lie the three small independent nations of Comoros, Mauritius, and Seychelles. Although scattered over more than 600,000 square miles of water, these nations are treated geographically and politically as part of Africa. The three nations are plagued with similar problems of planning and implementation of national language policies and developing related language curricula and teacher training programs. Although there is little common ground from which to trace parallel sociolinguistic developments in all three island groups, certain important characteristics do stand out as having played a part in the historical development of language usage, and of present language policies and pedagogical decisions. All three were uninhabited when first sighted and subsequently settled by external arrivals. Each has a history of colonization by several European powers. Each is a place of cultural and ethnic diversity brought about by the importation of slaves from Africa, and later immigrations from the Orient. Each country received its independence from European domination within a span of eight years, from 1968 to 1976.

Other problem areas can be found in one or two of the nations but not in all three. The Comoros, although closest to the African mainland, is probably the most isolated. The archipelago is located in the shipping lanes of the northern entrance to the Mozambique Channel. Many cargo vessels and supertankers pass the islands weekly, but few call to discharge cargo. Scheduled airlines arrive only three times a week, again with little discharge of cargo or passengers. A poor nation, items such as food and gasoline are scarce and must be rationed from time to time. Little money is in the country's treasury. In Mauritius, the cultural and ethnic diversity has caused much tension. Past governments have refrained from attacking the question of status for all the languages which are spoken, in favor of maintaining English as the only official language, due to its neutral position of not being spoken as the mother tongue of the inhabitants. Pupils in public schools presently take courses in English, French, and an Oriental language, but competence in these languages is minimal. The one underlying and unifying linguistic base is the local creole which is

spoken as a first or second language by virtually everyone. The status of that creole as a recognized national language, with all its educational implications, is currently being debated by the new government. The Seychelles is a land of cultural diversity as well, but not to the extent of Mauritius. The present government does recognize the local creole as the national language, and has taken great strides to develop a program of education based on that creole, not only for children, but for adults as well.

This monograph, therefore, will treat each of the three countries in terms of a capsulized account of its linguistic and educational history, as well as describe the language policies and educational programs presently under way, including primary and secondary schools, teacher training programs, adult functional literacy courses, and language-by-radio services. The final section will analyze these programs in terms of their pedagogical development and usefulness, and examine those areas of language education which still need to be addressed.



MAP OF THE STUDY AREA

FRONTPIECE

Classroom poster in Seychellois Kreol. The poem is entitled "My Mother," and reads, "My mother has a big smile on her pretty face. My mother always works hard every day. She always has a lot of joy in her voice." Courtesy of Seksyon Kreol, Ministry of Education, Victoria, Republic of Seychelles.

CHAPTER I

COMOROS

The Comoros Archipelago consists of a chain of four main islands of volcanic origin located in the northern Mozambique Channel, between Mozambique and Madagascar, at twelve degrees south latitude. Grande Comore, the northernmost of the islands is separated from Mayotte, to the south, by three hundred miles. The archipelago derives its name from the arabic word 'Kamar,' which means "moon." The archipelago was referred to in Arabic as the "Islands of the Moon." The first settlers of the islands were probably of Bantu origin from the east coast of Africa.[1] Arab sailors from the Persian Gulf area visited and settled the islands, as did peoples from Madagascar. Recent carbon datings of rocks used in the building of mosques, and from preserved grain fibers indicate human settlements as early as the eighth century. Further Muslim arrivals took place in the fifteenth century, while the Portuguese, French, Dutch, and other Malgasys visited the islands in the sixteenth century and brought African slaves with them to their new settlements. The local population of Bantu African ancestry was also involved in the importation of slaves. Later commerce with Africa, China, and the Mascarene Islands (Réunion and Mauritius) helped develop the diverse cultural personality of the islands.

The Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros was formed in 1975, after 133 years as a French colony and Overseas Territory. In an earlier referendum in 1974, the inhabitants of Mayotte voted against joining the new nation, but to remain within the French Republic. The island is now considered a "Collectivité Territoriale" by the French government. The Comoros Republic, comprising the islands of Grande Comore, Moheli, and Anjouan, nevertheless maintains claim to, and sovereignty over, Mayotte, and represents the island at the United Nations. Comoran sovereignty over Mayotte was reaffirmed by U.N. General Assembly in 1979. With only 719 square miles, including Mayotte, the country is a little over one-half the size of Rhode Island. A 1979 population estimate is placed at 300,000. The capital of Moroni is located on Grande Comore. French and Arabic are the official languages. Although Arabic

is documented in the constitution as an official language, it is used very little. The local language, called Comorien, is spoken on all of the islands, but has no official status. Although the French term Comorien is used by the Comoran government to refer to the local language, four dialects of the language are identified and referred to by their local names, i.e., Shingazija, Shinzwani, Shimwali, and Shimaore, spoken respectively on Grande Comore, Anjouan, Moheli, and Mayotte. Research into these dialects is presently being conducted by the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (INLECO).[2]

During French rule of the islands, educational opportunities were limited. A mere twenty-three percent of all school-age children received any formal education. After independence, all French teachers left the archipelago. In the spring of 1976, the Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique sent forty teachers from Belgium, Senegal, and Tunesia, to re-establish the secondary educational program. France resumed its assistance to the Comoran Ministry of National Education in 1978.

Public education is based on the French model. It is compulsory by statute through secondary school, but the policy is difficult to maintain due to a lack of educational materials. A shortage of paper for education is a major problem. Part of this obstacle is being overcome by using recycled paper. Materials developed locally are most often stenciled or photocopied for classroom use. Paper for individual pupil notebooks is scarce. Due to a limited number of school facilities and teachers, both the primary and secondary levels are conducted on a staggered time schedule. Primary school runs from 7:30 am to 12 noon, and again from 1:00 to 5:00 pm. Secondary school lasts only from 7:30 am to 12:30 pm. There are 1600 primary school classrooms on the three islands of Grande Comore, Moheli, and Anjouan. Secondary schools include three lycees, forty-six colleges, three écoles specialisées, i.e., health, technical, and primary teacher schools. There is one école normale for the training of secondary teachers, as well as one administration school for the training of civil servants.

The first years of school are in the Ecole Coranique at four to five years of age. Pupils learn

to read the Arabic characters of the Koran by rote memory, but there is no understanding of the passages. Up to three years of Koranic school is available before the pupil enters primary school for six years. The primary curriculum is divided into three sequences, each lasting two years. The first two years are called the Cours Préparatoire, years three and four are the Cours Elementaire, and the final two years are the Cours Moyen. Approximately eighty-five to ninety percent of the primary school age children continues through the first six years and sits for the Certificat d'Etude Primaire et Elementaire (CEPE). By constitutional statute, French is the language of instruction from the first day of primary school, and is taught as a subject for seven years. Classical Arabic is taught beginning with the first year of secondary school, but only on a moderate level due to a shortage of teachers in that subject.

Compulsory secondary education lasts for four years. After the first two years, the pupil may elect to transfer to a trade school to study mechanical, electrical, or building skills. Three years in the electrical sequence leads to the Baccalauriat degree. After successful completion of the full four-year sequence and Brevet d'Etude de Primaire Cycle (BEPC) examination, the pupil may continue for three additional years at the lycée level and obtain the Baccalauriat. Other choices are an additional three years of study at the Ecole Nationale de Secretariat et de Commerce, where the terminal degree is also the Baccalauriat, or the Ecole Nationale de Personnel et Santé. Teacher training is accomplished through a two-year program at the Ecole Normale Nationale d'Instituteurs. After graduation, an additional two years may be elected at the Centre d'Enseignement Superieure.

The place of English in the curriculum is presently being examined and major revisions will be forthcoming. This is viewed by the Comoran government as a necessity, since much commerce and business is conducted with nearby anglophone countries including Tanzania, Kenya, and Mauritius. The government wishes to increase its commercial ties with the United States. Now under scrutiny is the level at which the teaching of English should begin, i.e., in primary or secondary school. The old policy was to begin English in the third year of secondary

school and continue through a five-year sequence to completion of the Baccalauriat. To examine this problem, as well as to make other recommendations relevant to the needs of the country, the Institut National de l'Education commissioned a study of the current English program to be performed by the Entraide Universitaire Mondiale du Canada (EUMC).[3] In an interim report, the EUMC recommended beginning English no earlier than the third year of secondary school. According to the report, English should be considered the fourth language of the country, after Comorien, French, and Arabic. Since the child comes to school speaking Comorien, and must begin learning French immediately upon entering primary school, and continue studying Arabic beginning with the first year of secondary school, the report considers it counter-productive to insert the child into a fourth linguistic system before the third year of secondary school.[4]

The study recommends placing emphasis on the acquisition of communications skills, rather than cognitive acquisition of rules, vocabulary lists, and translation skills. This is to be accomplished by the use of an audio-lingual based methodology that will build oral competence in the context of cultural themes and situations, i.e., "at the market," "buying an airline ticket," "at the post office," etc. This should be accomplished with a basic vocabulary of between 2000 and 2500 words at the conclusion of the five-year sequence. The vocabulary acquisition schedule should be 360 words for the first year, 360 words for the second year, 450 words for the third year, between 540 and 650 words during the fourth year, and an additional 650 words in the final year. Reading and writing are to be introduced sometime after the second month of the introductory level. Writing should reflect the structural patterns and vocabulary which had first been practiced orally. This will be accomplished by copying of simple constructions, and answering questions based on the oral material. Gradually, a transition should be made into paragraphs, simple compositions, and later into more complex compositions which require sequencing of ideas, making judgements, and formulating hypotheses. The terminal objective, according to the EUMC report should be "functional writing," i.e., reading directions on consumer goods, reading a bank statement, writing business and commercial

letters, filling out governmental forms and order blanks, etc. The study further recommends special terminal objectives for pupils enrolled in the administrative and business courses.

The new emphasis placed on the study of English is part of important educational reforms now being implemented. The problem of when to begin English in the curriculum is seen as being tied to the absence of qualified teachers.[5] In the past, teachers were given a manual and put into a classroom situation. Few methodology courses or seminars were available. This situation is now being rectified. The long-term decision will be to begin English study in the third year of secondary school, but only after a sufficient number of qualified English teachers has been trained. The academic year of 1982/83 will see a postponement of the introduction of English until the fourth year of secondary school. This will give the Ministry of Education a one-year grace period to begin intensive training for English teachers. All training of these teachers will be accomplished locally in the Comoros. In addition to these reforms, the number of classroom hours of English study will be enlarged to four hours per day, or twenty hours per week throughout the English curriculum. The Ecole d'Enseignement Superieur expects to enroll fifteen students each year for specific training in teaching English. These teachers will train for two years at the EES. A proposed program for English teachers is being prepared by the Institut National de l'Education to include conversational English, grammatical review, corrective and technical phonetics, and language methodology.[6] Students attending this program will be required to teach English in the Comoros school system for a period of two to three years.

Textbooks are also being sought by the INE. In the past, CLAD material developed at Dakar, Senegal was used, but results with the CLAD program have left much to be desired.[7] One language lab is presently being installed at the Bureau d'Execution des Projets Education, in Moroni. The equipment is the German UHER LA 301CC. Due to prohibitive costs, this will be the only lab in the Comoros. In order to use the lab, classes will be forced to come to Moroni. This will not place much of a burden on the schools on Grande Comore, but will prove to be an expensive

proposition as well as a logistical nightmare to have to fly pupils from Moheli and Anjouan to Moroni for language lab practice.

The Ministry of Education is also concerned with adult education, and has developed a Department Radio Educatif, which cooperates with the Ministry of Information to transmit educational programs over Radio Comore, the governmental broadcasting service. Radio Comore maintains a national and an international network, with transmitters in the medium wave and shortwave bands. Due to radio propagation conditions near the equator, the medium wave transmissions are utilized primarily for the Moroni area, while the other islands of the archipelago, as well as Madagascar and parts of the east coast of Africa are reached over frequencies in the tropical shortwave bands.[8] Programs are broadcast in five languages, i.e., Comorien, French, Arabic, English and Swahili. The languages are listed in the order of the number of weekly hours of programming. There are three transmission periods during the day. Programs are broadcast from 6:00 to 8:00 am, from 12 noon to 3:00 pm, and again from 5:00 to 11:15 pm. Each of the foreign languages has at least one hour of the broadcast day devoted to it, although the English programs have been temporarily removed from the schedule as of July 1, 1982. This was due to a lack of adequately trained personnel to develop the programs in that language. Both networks are simulcast during parts of the transmission periods. These tandem transmissions include programs in Arabic, Swahili, and Comorien. These programs are basically directed to Comorans living and working overseas. Program schedules are developed in the production offices of Radio Comore, but must be sent to the First Minister of Information for approval. Programs include informational as well as educational formats. A high incident of agricultural and health programs are offered.

The Radio Comore building contains three studios, administrative and production offices, and a 500 watt FM transmitter which relays the programs to the main transmitters which are located on the volcanic ridge high above Moroni. Two transmitters of four kilowatts each transmit the morning programs in the 7 megahertz band, and the evening programs in the 3 megahertz band. These transmitters were given to the

Comoran government by the French, who removed them from service in Madagascar, when new transmitters were installed there. New studio facilities are being built by the German government. Under a cooperative agreement, France supplies the technicians, while Germany supplies the equipment. A new 40 kilowatt transmitter is being prepared for service. It will be fed into dipole antennas for the shortwave transmissions, and into an omnidirectional vertical antenna for the medium wave frequencies. The Peoples' Republic of China has supplied radio receivers for the population at the price of CFA 6.000 (about $20.00). This is vital, since the majority of the Comoran people are extremely poor, and radios are very expensive. Although all broadcasting is done from Moroni, future plans call for the construction of a relay transmitter on Moheli.

Contrary to educational policies in the rest of Africa, the Comoros has not instituted a program of beginning primary education in the local vernacular language. This is because there has never been research into the linguistic description of Comorien from which to develop materials suitable for classroom use. This deficit has further implications in language study in that there is no adult functional literacy program in the country. The research presently under way at INLECO may at a later time prove to be applicable to the development of such materials, but at the moment it is a linguistic project without pedagogical ramifications. Both the Ministry of Education and the Institut National de l'Education have discussed the possibilities of undertaking such a study of Comorien, but do not have the manpower nor the funds for such an endeavor.

Notes

[1]Interview with Damir Ben Ali, Director, Centre National de Documentation et de Recherches sur les Comores (CNDRC), Moroni, July 1982.

[2]INLECO, 2 rue de Lille, 75007, Paris. Data show that Comorien has a Bantu structure with many lexical items from Arabic and Swahili.

[3]See Geoffrey Vitale, Reforme des Programmes d'Anglais, Rapport Interimaire, Moroni: Institut National de l'Education, 1982.

[4]Ibid., p. 4.

[5]This problem is not unique to the Comoros, but rampant throughout Africa. For a discussion of the problem, see Edmun B. Richmond, New Directions in Language Teaching in Sub-Saharan Africa, Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 1983.

[6]Interview with Saïd Jaffar El-Macelie, Director, INE, July, 1982.

[7]See Edmun B. Richmond, New Directions, for a discussion of the CLAD methodology and materials.

[8]The frequency bands between 2300 kHz and 5060 kHz, reserved for use by Developing Nations in the area between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. Radio wave propagation in the medium wave band near the Equator is virtually impossible during daylight hours. Frequencies in the Tropical Band are used to beam signals directly overhead. These signals return to Earth to serve a radius of about 130 miles from the transmitter.

CHAPTER II

MAURITIUS

The island nation of Mauritius is located in the southwestern Indian Ocean, about 500 miles east of Madagascar. The nation is composed of the island of Mauritius, and its dependencies of Rodrigues, to the east, and Agalega and Cargados Carajos, to the north. The country's area is approximately 790 square miles, slightly larger than the Comoros. Population was estimated in 1980 to be 969,000 inhabitants, which places Mauritius third in world population density after Hong Kong and Bangladesh. The country is divided into nine political and educational districts, Plaines Wilhelms, Port Louis, Flacq, Grand Port, Pamplemousses, Riviere du Rampart, Savanne, Moka, and Riviere Noire.[1]

The ethnic composition of Mauritius is diverse and reflects the island's history as a depository for peoples of varied cultural entities. The Mauritian government recognizes three main ethnic categories. The Indo-Mauritians represent sixty-eight percent of the population. Their descendants were originally from the Indian sub-continent and were introduced to the island in the nineteenth century. This category is subdivided into the Hindu Group, with fifty-two percent, and the Mulsim Group, with seventeen percent. The category called the General Population consists of persons of European, African, or mixed ancestry who embrace the Christian religion. This category consists of twenty-nine percent of the population, and is further subdivided into several smaller groups. The Sino-Mauritians are of Chinese ancestry who began arriving during the latter half of the nineteenth century. They represent three percent of the population. All of these groups give Mauritius a distinct cultural amalgam, but also plague the nation with political, linguistic, and educational disparity. Languages in current use on the islands are French, Hindi, Gujerati, Urdu, Tamil, Telegu, Marathi, Mandarin, and two creolized languages, Bhojpuri, which is based on the Indian language of Bihar state, and a French-based creole, which is by far the dominant language. In spite of this linguistic diversity, English is the only official language. It is used as the vehicle of communication in parliament, the courts, and in education. There has

been no change in language policy since British control of the islands.

Originally uninhabited, Mauritius was first settled and named by the Dutch in the seventeenth century, although the Portuguese are known to have used the island as a way-station to and from the East in the sixteenth century. The Dutch abandoned the island in the early eighteenth century. It was subsequently claimed by France in 1715, and renamed Ile de France. Along with the Ile de Bourbon, now called Réunion, to the southwest, the French established a plantation economy based on sugar and slaves. During the wars of the nineteenth century, the French used the Ile de France as a place from which naval attacks against the British settlements in the area could be launched. These activities increased during the Napoleonic Wars. In 1810, the British engaged and defeated the French fleet and captured the Iles de France, Bourbon, and Rodrigues. By the Treaty of Paris, the French ceded Mauritius and its dependencies, including Rodrigues and the Seychelles Islands to England. The British reintroduced the original Dutch name to Mauritius, and returned the Ile de Bourbon to France. A provision of the treaty called for the British to acknowledge the rights of the French inhabitants to maintain their culture, religion, and language. French culture further flourished because the island was never settled by a large number of Britons. All local ordinances were published in English and French, but all court proceedings were conducted in French. English replaced French in the supreme court in 1847.

The abolition of slavery in 1835 provided another turning point in the history of the island. Since slaves could no longer be imported from the African continent, the French plantation owners had to look elsewhere for personnel to work the sugar farms and refineries. A massive importation of indentured workers from the sub-continent of India was begun. From this point, Indian languages competed for linguistic space along with French, English, and Creole, and the colonial authorities were forced to make provisions for these languages in education. By 1862, seven schools for Indians were established, with instruction in Bengali, Tamil, and Hindi. In spite of this, the authorities recognized the need

for the Indian children to learn to express themselves in Creole and English.[2] In 1877, the government stipulated that annual examinations would be offered in only one language. The choice of the language was left to the managers of the schools.[3] 1882 brought the ruling that English would be the only examining language. Candidates for teaching certificates had to pass exams in two languages, the first in English, with the second being either French, Hindi, or Tamil. This brought a violent reaction in some quarters to the gaining importance accorded to English. Other educators believed the solution was to use the child's natural language as the medium of instruction in the primary schools as a means of fulfilling a general system of education for the most people. However, examinations should only be given in one language chosen by the school managers. In the early 1900s it was decided to use vernacular languages in lower and middle primary education, but English and French had to be taught as subjects from the beginning. In the upper years, English alone was the language of instruction. Until the 1930s, the collective Indian voice was not powerful enough to force governmental inclusion of Indian languages in primary schools. The Indians demanded that their languages be included in the curriculum so that their children could study the language of their forefathers. By 1941, Hindi, Urdu, and Tamil were offered in primary schools.

That same year produced another major turning point in Mauritian language education with the appearance of the highly controversial Ward Report, authored by the newly appointed Director of Education.[4] Ward was convinced that the multilingual nature of the school system was hampering education. He encouraged French as the language of instruction and literacy, and considered the official policy of teaching English to be counter-productive. The most controversial item in his report was his recommendation to ban all Oriental languages from the primary school curriculum. A direct outcome of the Ward Report was the establishment of the 1941 Education Act, in which reponsibility for all curriculum development fell on the newly-formed Education Committee of the Director of Education. The governor and the Colonial Office overruled much of Ward's language policy, and passed Ordinance 30 of 1941, which called for the Director to ensure the spread of English

through more effective teaching methods. French was clearly to revert to second place in language importance. Indian languages were indeed removed from the public schools.

As a result of pressure from the Indian community, the government developed a modified language policy in the Education Ordinance of 1944, in which English was to be the vehicle of instruction in the fifth and sixth years, and all conversations between pupil and teacher would be conducted in English. In the lower primary classes, any language could be employed at the discretion of the head teacher. French was introduced as a subject during the third year. The Director was allowed to provide for the teaching of Oriental languages in primary schools. In 1952, Oriental languages were officially introduced into the primary school curriculum. The Education Ordinance of 1957 provided for the possibility of using any language in the lower primary classes which might be deemed suitable for the pupils. It further decreed that English was to be the only language of instruction in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Teacher and pupil were still required to use English in all classroom conversations except for lessons in other languages. This is still the official stance of the government. In spite of all the regulatory jockying of languages, Mauritian Creole remained, and still remains, the dominant means of communication.

The constant competition between English and French in the schools, and the Creole vernacular of the home resulted in a language program in which pupils developed limited knowledge and ability in English and French. The British wanted to ameliorate the acquisition of English, but French had strong roots and was not easily abandoned. Mauritius was settled at different periods of time by different ethnic and linguistic groups of people, none of whom wanted to relinquish their cultural heritage nor language. As a result of the parents insisting that their children learn the language of their ancestors, "the little children find themselves very often struggling to learn three foreign languages at the hands of 'teachers' who are themselves masters of none of the three."[5]

Mauritius became self-governing in 1967, and

received its independence in 1968. The language situation has remained the same since the 1957 ordinance. However, a new government came to power in the election of June, 1982. The ruling Labour Party which had been in power since 1967, was replaced by the Mouvement Militant Mauricien allied with the Partie Socialiste Mauricien, which formed a parliament with sixty-two members, including for the first time, two members from the Organization du Peuple Rodrigues, the island dependency. The status of Mauritian Creole is viewed favorably by the new government. There is a movement to adopt it as a national language. The seriousness of the language problem and subsequent educational policies in Mauritius were taken up in a national seminar in October, 1982, in an attempt to delineate the needs of the nation in terms of language usage and status, in the hope of providing a definitive language policy which would include the recognition of Creole as a unifying factor in an otherwise volatile cultural crucible.[6] Seventy-one papers were delivered at the seminar, but little was settled.

The educational system in Mauritius is patterned after the British model. It is composed of six years of primary school, called Standards I through IV; three years of junior secondary school, or Forms I through III; two years of upper secondary school, Forms IV and V; and two years of Form VI secondary school consisting of a lower and upper form. Schools are either government controlled or government aided. In 1982, there were 271 primary schools and 147 secondary schools in the country. Public education is not compulsory, but it is free. The Mauritian Institute of Education estimates that ninety-five percent of all children of primary school age attend classes. A factor in coaxing children to class are free lunches and free shoes which are provided by the government. Children begin Standard I at four years of age. Public examinations are conducted after Standard VI, Form V, and Form VI. Passing the exams qualifies the pupil to proceed to the next level of instruction. The exam after Standard VI leads to the Certificate of Primary Education. The Form V exam leads to the Certificate of Education, and the Form VI leads to the Higher Certificate of Education. Pupils who do not pass the CPE are permitted to repeat Standard VI and retake the exam, provided they are not over thirteen years of age. If the pupils fail

the exam on the second try, they are barred from entering secondary school, but may attend one of the Community Schools which were established in 1979 to provide remedial and special education.

Teacher preparation and certification is accomplished at the Mauritius Institute of Education. Formerly, the Teacher Training College of the University of Mauritius had that responsibility, but the College was recently incorporated into the MIE in an effort to make teacher education more efficient. The MIE is located adjacent to the University which provides easy access to the facilities of both institutions.

The absence of a cohesive governmental language policy has its effect on teacher training. Teachers are classified according to their qualifications as teachers of general subjects or as teachers of Oriental languages. The teachers of general subject matter are required to be competent in English and French as well as in their area of specialization. The teachers of Oriental languages may specialize from among Hindi, Urdu, Gujerati, Arabic, Marathi, Tamil, Telegu, and Mandarin Chinese.[7]

As in most nations of the Third World, teacher training has proceeded at a slow pace with minimal requirements. Until 1976, trainees could enter the Teacher Training College for two years with 'O' Level exams (given after the fourth year of secondary school) being the only requirement for admission. Trainees for primary school positions completed another year of general secondary school, then went on to one year of specialized courses at the Teacher Training College. Candidates for positions as secondary school teachers completed secondary school and received a teaching certificate without any training. Since 1976, there has been a program to train three types of teachers. Prospective teachers now can work toward a Teacher Diploma, which is available to candidates who have passed 'A' Level exams, taken after the last two years of secondary school; a Teacher Certificate, open to teachers with at least five years classroom experience but who have not completed the 'A' Levels; and a Post Graduate Certificate of Education, available to those teachers who already possess the Diploma or Certificate. Most candidates attend classes on a part-time basis for three years.

This is due to their regular teaching positions in the school system. After a corpus of trained teachers becomes available, new candidates will be required to attend a full-time program of study for two years. These three degree programs have gained international recognition, and are accepted for employment in Australia and the United Kingdom. In 1982, there were 282 trainees for the Diploma, sixty-two for the Certificate, and ninety-two for the PGCE.

Teacher preparation in languages is achieved through the Department of Humanities at the University of Mauritius. The French Section and the English Section coordinate the programs and cooperate in offering courses relevant to both languages to avoid duplication of material. The curriculum follows the general outline as reported above, but has as its entrance requirement a secondary school degree and completion of two 'A' Level examinations, one in English, and one in French. Candidates for the Diploma or Certificate study both English and French, while PGCE candidates major in English or French. The two-year program contains coursework in applied linguistics, structure, phonology, and methodological theory. Both audio-lingual and cognitive code theories are treated, but the department encourages an eclectic approach to methodology. Teachers are told to use the system that works best for their pupils. Although no actual courses are directed toward the subjects, several lectures in general linguistics, psycho- and sociolinguistics are given each year. The course in phonology contains practice based on corrective phonetics. Students are required to identify, isolate, and correct their own pronunciation difficulties before attempting to proceed with corrective measures for their pupils. A large part of this training takes place in the Department's language laboratory.

Unfortunately, that is the only laboratory in the country. There are none in the schools due to a lack of funds for such equipment. The university lab was donated to the government by UNDP. It is a Norwegian lab with twenty-four booths, using the Tanberg IS6-B audio-active system. Two Tanberg series 5100 reel-to-reel tape recorders are used at the control desk, while each booth has its own smaller reel-to-reel unit. The Department has its own recording studio adjacent to the lab and control room. There,

tapes and cassettes in English and French are produced for teacher training as well as for the public schools. The lab is open on a full-time schedule from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, five days a week, as well as on a part-time schedule specifically for in-service training of school teachers. This schedule runs one full day from nine to four, one half-day from one to five-thirty, and Saturday mornings from nine to noon. As a service to the general public, the lab is also open in the afternoons for anyone who wishes to receive practice in English.

Two ongoing projects of the Department include the production of material to teach poetry in the schools. Several times during the academic year, classes in poetry are presented. The second project entails work in language interference problems. The theoretical work in this area is put to practical use by incorporating it into the framework of the teacher training program.

Textbook selection presents other problems for educators. There is no list of approved texts, due to the scarcity of textbooks in the country. Books which are available are usually out of date and often irrelevant to the Mauritian child. Free adoption, based on the choice of each teacher has been the norm. All books on languages are adopted from international publishers, mostly from the United Kingdom and the British Commonwealth nations. There are no texts available from the United States. However, an Institute Curriculum Centre was recently established. This organization will ultimately coordinate the development and production of new materials specifically designed for the Mauritian school system.

A very successful English language venture on the island has been the Mauritius College of the Air. This non-profit organization has been operating since 1972 to provide services and support programs to non-formal education. Its prime mission is to aid in the teaching of English for secondary schools, and for those pupils who fail the English part of the School Certificate Examination. This is accomplished by the development of correspondence courses utilizing radio and television as the vehicle of dissemination. The College has its own small radio and television studio, documentation offices and print shop in Quatre Bornes, along with its executive and production

offices in Moka.

Conceived by an act of parliament in 1972 due to the numerous failures on the English exams, a pilot program was funded by the Ministry of Education to develop a workbook designed for the last year of secondary school. The workbook would be supplemented by radio and television broadcasts. Television receivers and transistor radios were placed in thirty schools. It was expected that the radio and television components of the program would improve aural competence in spoken English. Basic English structures and pronunciation drills were used as the central part of the course. The Ministry stipulated that the program had to show positive results within one year, or it would be cancelled. Consequently, no time was available for pilot testing or validation of the material, or to prepare teachers in the methodology and daily scheduling of materials.

The workbook was designed with several factors in mind. Primary in consideration was that the material be relevant to the pupils. Comprehension passages about Mauritian life and history were written. Grammar and pronunciation drills focused on the correction of typical local errors and related the written work to the stories and exercises heard on the broadcasts. The book was prepared considering the lack of teacher training for the course. Consequently, it was designed to guide both the pupil and the teacher through the various exercises in a step-by-step manner. A set of teacher notes were also prepared to offer various classroom techniques, along with a key for all the exercises and tests. These notes were sent to the teachers one week in advance of each broadcast. All of the taped broadcasts used native speakers of English, so that the pupil would be exposed to a native model as well as the Mauritian brand of English as spoken by the classroom teacher.[8] All schools set aside the same period each week for the broadcast of the programs, which lasted twenty minutes. A ten-minute time period was used immediately after the broadcast for oral follow-up of the material.

A television program was also produced and integrated into the school curriculum. Called English by Television for Form V, The Report and the Essay, the series was scheduled once every two weeks.[9] To

allow for public holidays, transmission problems, and teacher absences, the same program was aired four times during each two-week period. The Ministry of Education provided the schools with television receivers. Programs were either locally produced or were supplied by outside sources such as UNDP and the British Council.

The first year's programs were very popular, but the Ministry did not want to continue the program due to overriding costs involving material production, purchasing and maintaining the radios and televisions, as well as giving the texts and supplementary materials free of charge to the pupils under the governmental Book Loan Scheme. After being dropped by the Ministry, the MCA, supported by popular acceptance and enthusiasm remained in operation by revising the course into a correspondence course for pupils who could not pass the secondary school entrance examinations. The new course, called English Language Correspondence Course, Vol. 1-3, had a total of twenty-four units prepared using programmed learning techniques.[10] A teacher's manual was also produced and teacher training seminars were scheduled on the use of the materials. These seminars allowed the teachers to preview each program in advance of its airing in order to be better prepared for the broadcast and follow-up period. A second course based on the British Broadcasting Corporation's series, "English by Radio," was developed as a continuation of the MIE programs which ended in Form III. This series, called "People You Meet," was offered as a way to continue the material of Forms IV and V, but on a voluntary basis of the pupil. As a means of ascertaining the impact of the programs, the MCA devised a series of quizzes that could be answered only if the pupil had actually participated in the programs. At the end of the term, monetary prizes were given to those pupils with the highest scores. MCA hired the use of the Ghandi Auditorium in Port Louis for the occasion. Over 1,000 people with ages ranging from seven to seventy years attended, not only to applaud the winners, but also the MCA staff.

The whole idea of a language by radio and television course spawned interest by a group of Mauritian companies in a commercial English course for their secretarial staffs. MCA developed a series of programs based on the BBC series, "Take a Letter,

Please." MCA viewed the series as being too old, and developed its own material and workbook entitled, English for Business.[11] The program has been aired three times. After each series ended, MCA polled its students with a questionnaire regarding their expectations of the course. Results of the poll were most positive, as in all of MCA's programs. These language-by-radio courses seem assured to continue as part of language training in Mauritius.

One of the main concerns of the new government is the role of Mauritian Creole, not only as a unifying factor in cultural and political life, but also as a factor in national education. Three days after the newly elected government took office in June, 1982, the new Ministry of Arts and Cultural Affairs was formed. Such matters used to be under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs. The government felt that education could be best served by a ministry totally devoted to that field. The primary role of the new ministry will be to promulgate and enhance a Mauritian culture, instead of focusing on the individual cultural entities which make up Mauritian society. Such a concept had never been promoted before. The creole, called Mauricien, is the one unifying factor among all ethnic groups. Although cultural diversity is maintained and guarded by each group, Creole is spoken as the vehicle of daily communication, in the home, in the market, at work. Although several languages are used in broadcasting, all important radio and television announcements are made in Creole. A new spirit of cultural awareness by the youth of the island has resulted in the revival of oral traditions associated with Creole, and many groups have been campaigning for recognition of Creole as the national language. The government plans to introduce Creole into the court system by elevating it to the same status as English.[12] Creole literature has been gaining in popularity.[13] The Mauritian Institute of Education considers Mauricien to be a standard language, and with government support, is developing a curriculum in primary education that would use the creole as the language of instruction for the first three years.

The suggestion to recognize Creole as the national language is hampered by the perceptions of the general population as well as some members of parliament, and has developed into a hotly contested

debate. The desire to afford Creole a national status is based on the conclusion of some Mauritian linguists that the language has left its period of creolization, has its own literature, and therefore should be considered the unifying standard of the nation. Many of the general population have the attitude that Creole is nothing more than a debased form of French, a patois with no grammar that cannot be used to express any forms of abstract thoughts. Because of these pejorative attitudes, some parents do not want their children to learn Creole in the schools, fearing the result will be to retard education in French and English, as well as to retard the child's ability to function in those languages. The urban educated population especially opposes the use of Creole in the schools.[14]

Part of the controversy is due to confusion in parliament and the public sector regarding linguistic and pedagogical terminology. Terms such as 'standard language,' 'official language,' 'national language,' 'patois,' 'language of instruction,' 'support language,' and 'language subject,' must be explained before any such governmental decision or popular support will be forthcoming. One of the first tasks of the national conference on language policy, held in October, 1982, was to address such terminology. The matter of orthography was also on the agenda of the conference. Three orthographies are presently in use by Mauritian authors. Some feel a frenchified orthography should be adopted, since many typewriters have the French diacritics already on the keyboard. Some linguists favor an alphabet utilizing the international phonetic symbols, which appear on most of the newer typewriters. Proponents of this orthography argue that a French orthography should not be used since Mauritien is not a deformed poor relation of French, but is a language in and of itself. This point would be made clear only if the orthography were different. Utilizing an orthography different from French will reinforce this notion. Other points of discussion focus on the roles of English and French. One faction supports the primacy of English based on its cultural neutrality as a language. Others support the emphasis of French over English due to the linguistic proximity of French and Creole, arguing that French would be easier to learn. The role of Bhojpuri Creole spoken by a large segment of the population, as well as its relation to Mauricien is also an area of discussion.

With all of the conflicting and overlapping viewpoints, Mauritian officials and educators are keeping an eye on two experiments presently under way in the Seychelles, and in Haiti. Both of these nations have decided on a policy of using Creole as the medium of instruction for the first three years of primary school before shifting to English and French respectively.[15] These projects may help determine educational policy in Mauritius.

Notes

[1]Listed in order of population.

[2]Annual Report on Education in Mauritius, 1865.

[3]Ordinance 89, 1877.

[4]W. E. F. Ward, Report of the 1941 Education Act, Port Louis: Ministry of Education.

[5]Ramesh Ramdoyal, The Development of Education in Mauritius, Reduit: Mauritius Institute of Education, 1977, p. 132.

[6]The years 1967 and 1968 saw racial and labor unrest as well as violent Creole-Muslim rioting.

[7]Mandarin is the only Chinese language taught in the schools, although three are spoken in Mauritius, i.e., Cantonese, Hakka, and Mandarin.

[8]This is the reverse idea of English teaching in Kenya, where local speakers are recorded in an effort to promulgate a "Kenyan Standard" of English. For a discussion of this language-by-radio program, see Edmun B. Richmond, New Directions in Language Teaching in Sub-Saharan Africa, Lanahm: University Press of America, 1983, pp. 38-39.

[9]Moka: Mauritius College of the Air, 1980.

[10]Moka: MCA, 1980.

[11]Patricia Hookoomsingh, English for Business. An Introductory Course in Modern Style Letter-Writing Developed from the BBC Series, "Take a Letter, Please," Revised Course, Moka: MCA, 1982.

[12]See Mauritian Courts' Ordinance of 1945. Section 14 affirms the official status of English in the Supreme Court. Section 57 affirms its status in the District Courts.

[13]For a discussion of Mauritian literature, see Vinesh Y. Hookoomsingh, Langue Creole, Litterature Nationale et Mauricianisme Populaire, Reduit: Mauritian Institute of Education, Cyclostyled, 1980.

[14]According to a 1977 survey which examined the questions of Creole as official language in the schools and in broadcasting. For a summary of this survey, see Vinesh Y. Hookoomsingh, La Langue Créole Mauricienne: Une Language Nationale dans un Contexte Multilingue et Pluraliste, Reduit: Mauritian Institute of Education, Cyclostyled, 1982.

[15]For a description of the Haitian experiment, see Fantz Lofficial, Créole Français: Une Fausse Querelle? Bilinguisme et Réforme de l'Enseignement en Haïti, Québec: Collectif Paroles, 1979; Albert Valdman, ed., Créole et Enseignement Primaire en Haïti. Actes du Seminaire Organisé à Port-au-Prince en 1979, Bloomington: Indiana University, 1980; Pierre Vernet, Techniques d'Ecriture du Créole Haïtien, Port-au-Prince: Le Natal, 1980; Alain Bentolila and Leon Gani, "Haïti: Fondements et Enjeux de la Reforme de l'Education," Paper presented at the IIIe Colloque International des Etudes Créoles de Sainte Lucie, 1981.

CHAPTER III

SEYCHELLES

The Republic of Seychelles is a group of some ninety-two islands lying 1,000 miles off the Kenyan coast just south of the equator, scattered across 386,000 miles of the Indian Ocean. Total land surface of the islands amounts to approximately 170 square miles. The archipelago is geologically interesting in that about half of the islands are granite-based, the other half coralline-based. These are the only mid-ocean islands of granite in the world. The principle island, Mahé, with the country's capital, Victoria, contains most of the population and over half of the nation's total area. It is located about 1,120 miles from Mombassa, and 680 miles from Madagascar. Population was estimated in 1980 to be just over 62,000 inhabitants. Most are descended from eighteenth century French settlers and African slaves. Later admixtures of European, Indian, and Chinese round out the ethnic composition. Seychellois Kreol is the first national language. English and French are the other two.

These islands appeared on Portuguese charts as early as 1505, and perhaps were visited by Arab sailors. The islands remained uninhabited and unclaimed until 1742, when the French governor of Mauritius sent an expedition to the area. By 1794, full French settlement had occurred. The islands passed to British domination in 1814, as a result of the Treaty of Paris after the French defeat in the Napoleonic Wars, and became a dependency of Mauritius. The Seychelles obtained Crown Colony status in 1903, and received independence in 1976. The next year saw a coup which resulted in the establishment of the present leftist-oriented government. It is this government which has effected major changes in education, including the recognition of Seychellois Kreol as the prime national language as opposed to a European language, as well as the utilization of Kreol as the language of instruction in primary education.

The educational system in the Seychelles is based on the British model. However, since the establishment of the new government in 1977, parts of the system have been redesigned on several occasions to coincide with the particular needs of the country.

The school year begins in January. Each term is in session for twelve to thirteen weeks with holidays between each quarter. The major period of vacation is during the month of December. There are twenty-four primary and secondary schools, plus a number of specialized schools, including a technical school, secretarial school, hotel school, maritime school, managerial school, and several artisan centers. The Departments of Health, Finance, and the Ministry of Agriculture also provide education for their personnel. Administration and supervision of the system is the responsibility of the Department of Education and Culture.

Education is free and compulsory from the primary level. The educational cycle begins with two pre-school years, called the Crèche years. This program involves children from four to five years of age, and provides free meals for each child. This is an advantage to Seychellois parents who must work during the day, and cannot afford to pay for a sitter or meals for the child. In 1981, more than 3,300 children were enrolled in the program. The government envisages expanding the Crèche program to include children from one month to four years of age to provide a better health plan, in an attempt to lower infant mortality rates.

Primary education lasts nine years, and encompasses the old British system of six years of primary school and the first three-year cycle of secondary school. Restructuring of the secondary system was accomplished in 1980, with the creation of the Service National de la Jeunesse (SNJ), the national youth service program. During the first two years of secondary school, all pupils are enrolled in the SNJ. The program consists of subject material normally offered at a traditional secondary school, but also consists of participating in community development and work outside of the classroom. All pupils in the SNJ live in a special village where they study, do close-order drill, and work in the fields. Upon fulfillment of SNJ service and successful passing of examinations, pupils will continue into the new Polytechnique, which will commence in 1983. Included in the Polytechnique are four tracks, including a four-year and a three-year technical program, a two-year professional program, and a two-year general program. This corresponds to the British upper

secondary school. Upon successful results on the school-leaving examinations at the end of the Polytechnique courses, the graduate may choose to pursue a professional career by entering one of the specialized schools, or continue to a university. Since there are no universities in the Seychelles, such study must be accomplished overseas.

The heart of the Seychelles educational reforms lies in the decision to make the local Kreol the language of instruction for the first three years of primary school, as well as to develop an adult functional literacy program in Kreol. This decision was made clear the day after the new government came to power. In an article in the local newspaper, the then Minister of Education affirmed the government's policy and announced, "dans les années suivantes, une place plus importante sera faite à l'étude des langues."[1] Later, in a report on education reforms, the Seychelles Peoples Progressive Front (SPPF) declared, "Literacy is the very foundation of all our development. Until every Seychellois man and woman can read and write and have a conception of the world in which he lives no progress can be made in achieving a higher standard of living."[3] The government recognized the importance of languages as the vehicle of education and information.

The history of language in Seychelles education is reflected in the history of the former European colonial powers. The British Colonial Reform of 1944 dictated the simultaneous introduction of English and French in Standard 1, as the languages of instruction. This condition remained until 1970. As a result of the Hanchett Report, only English was taught from Standard 1, while French was introduced in Standard 4.[3] Both the Colonial Reform and the Hanchett Report attempted to place equal status to both languages, but, as a British colony, there was a slight favoring toward the use of English. The year 1977 brought the decision to elevate the local creole to national language status and to use it as the language of instruction. At first, many citizens were against the use of a creole in the schools for the same reasons discussed above under Mauritius.[4] The government decided to forgo this policy for the time being, and to treat both English and French equally in the schools. A program of bilingual education was initiated that year using the two European languages.

After a three-year program which proved unsuccessful due to lack of teacher support, the lack of French pedagogical materials for the teachers, and a lack of pupil interest in the French materials, the program was abandoned. In 1981, the decision was made to introduce Kreol as the language of instruction. A resolution adopted at the congress of the SPPF in July of that year stipulated that Kreol would become the first language of instruction and that one of the foreign languages, i.e., English or French, would be taught as the primary foreign language, the other as the secondary foreign language. At a language meeting of the Ministry of Education and Information in August, the decision was made. English was immediately to become the medium of instruction for all subjects up to Primary Grade 6. As soon as possible, it would become the medium of instruction up to Primary 9. A team was established to develop a program in Kreol. That language program would be put into effect at the beginning of the 1982 school year. The first three years of primary education would utilize Kreol as the language of instruction. Oral English would be introduced in the second year, while French would commence in the fourth year. From the fourth year, some of the science courses would be taught exclusively in English, the others remaining taught in Kreol. However, Kreol will be taught as a subject after the transfer to English. The exact date of this transfer has not yet been determined.

To mount such a massive change in the language curriculum, an equally massive materials development program had to be instituted. This was accomplished by the Kreol Section team of the Ministry of Education and the National Institute of Pedagogy, which consists of eight curriculum developers, two full-time graphic artists, and two full-time typists. All materials for the beginning phase of the program were written and prepared in six months! Books entitled Konte ziska 5 (Count to 5), Konte ziska 10 (Count to 10), Lir i Gou (Reading is Fun), Kalkil (Arithmetic), even comic books based on Kreol characters out of oral literature, i.e., TiZan Zann ek Loulou (Little Jean, Jeanne and the Wolf), were made ready for the first year program. The work was made easier since many local preliminary investigations had been conducted on the structure of Seychellois Kreol, as well as the development of a Kreol orthography.

But the general populace, which was against such a change in 1977, had to be convinced of the legitimacy of Kreol as a language and not as a debased version of French. While the materials were being developed, the government embarked on a program of "Sensitization" directed toward the general public, with the Semenn Kreol, a one-week series of exhibits, films, theater performances, and radio programs geared to legitimatize the existence of Kreol, its oral traditions, its orthography, and its use as the national language in national development. (Government officials are now using Kreol at official meetings and functions.)

In order for the Kreol program to be successful, the first year school teachers had to be trained in the use of the materials as well as classroom methodology. A six-week course for sixty P1 teachers included the introduction of the newly adopted alphabet, techniques in teaching reading and numeracy with the new texts, theory and process of creolization, and the structure of Seychellois Kreol. These same teachers provided feedback for the Kreol Section developmental team by meeting with the team for one week during each term. The second training course was held in December, 1982. The teachers who taught the first year in P1 will move to grade P2 with their pupils. In addition, these same teachers were used to train the new teachers who would begin P1 in January, 1983.

The Kreol Section is also involved in developing a grammar and dictionary of Kreol. One of the interesting facets of this work is the creation of new technical words according to Kreol morphology and phonotactics.[5] It is the responsibility of the Kreol Section not only to produce classroom materials and teacher manuals, but also to evaluate the materials and methods, provide teacher training, and institute linguistic research into the structure of Kreol. The present ongoing research is conducted in cooperation with the Université René Decartes Program in Creole Studies.[6]

The classroom methodology itself is based on the combination of several pedagogical theories which were used in the production of the literacy and numeracy courses. In addition, a course in Environmental Appreciation was also developed along

pedagogical lines. Before beginning to read and write, the pupils are led through an oral phase of vocabulary identification, and through a series of related motor and tactile exercises as a means of increasing their understanding of abstract dimensional and directional concepts which are used in the teaching of writing.[7] These concepts are necessary to teach straight lines, curved lines, circles, spaces between letters, spaces between words, etc.[8] Vocabulary is taught by using drawings of objects familiar to the child in his daily environment, and associating the word with the drawing. Target vocabulary for the first year is 300 words, along with the ability to read and write them. The arithmetic texts teach numerical concepts again by association of the numbers with pictures taken from the child's daily life. The manipulative vocabulary of arithmetic is also Kreol. Concepts such as azoute (add), tire (subtract), adisyon (addition), miltiplikasyon (multiplication), egal (equals), lansanm (total), are taught and require such tasks as Zwenn lansanm menm kantite (Join together the items of the same quantity), Ekri nimero ki manke dan kare (Write the number that's missing from the box), Ekri konbyen i fer (Write how much it is), and others which contain number-to-picture tasks. The environmental course has a text meant to develop the child's curiosity in his surroundings. This is reinforced by many field trips to the beach, forest areas, botanical gardens, and farms. This is viewed as a way to enrich the child's vocabulary, to awaken his curiosity, and to instill a sense of pride and respect for his homeland.

The Kreol program is also extended to adult literacy. The Ministry of Education and Information has a large Functional Literacy Section which develops programs and materials, and trains its teachers. It also has a large print shop which prepares all materials. The program has three phases. The first phase teaches basic reading, writing, and numeracy skills in Kreol, which will be used in the second phase of basic literacy in English. This leads to the third phase which prepares adults who left school at an early age, for successful completion of 'O' Level and 'A' Level exams, and a secondary school diploma.

The Section has four full-time staff members and three part-time teachers who also teach public school during the day. All literacy classes are held

after working hours and take place in the public school buildings, since there are no community centers. Classes are held two or three times per week, with most sessions lasting one and one half hours. The program consists of three levels of Kreol. One level for illiterates, one for semi-illiterates, and one for literates who may already know English or French. Suitable materials are developed for each of the three levels. Material is written in the sequence of sound to symbol to word. Each lesson begins with one key sound which is repeated chorally and individually in syllables and words. A reading and writing sequence follows the oral work. The same syllables and words are practiced. Syllables are studied in CV and VCV configurations. After the students are able to read and write the words of the unit, the teacher expands the lesson to sentences and finally to short paragraphs. The teaching order of consonants and vowels is based on a study of their frequency of occurrence in Kreol words. The vowels are taught in the order i,o,a,e,ou. Consonants are sequenced as l,t,b,k,f. CV sequences follow the same procedure, i.e., the first CV syllables are li, lo, la, le, lou, followed by ti, to, ta, te, tou, etc. The Literacy Section calculates the time needed for an adult to proceed from the illiterate to the literate stage as an average seventy-two hours of study based on three classroom hours per week. To reach the second stage of literacy in English requires an additional year and one half study. Within two years, the Seychelles adult can be literate in two languages.

An important feature of the program is the amount of post-literacy materials which have been developed. Books and pamphlets are available to teach the Metric system, advanced arithmetic, child care, and personal health. These books are available in both Kreol and English. There is also a pamphlet with the Seychellois Constitution written in Kreol. The local newspaper, Nation, appears daily, and is written in Kreol, English, and French. This provides another source of post-literacy material, but more important allows the new literate to receive continuing results of the fruit of his labor, while learning about his country and the world around him.

Public school teachers are paid for their literacy teaching, in excess of their regular duties

in the schools. They are trained during school holiday periods. Training includes how to develop their own materials as well as how to interact with adult learners. In 1980, there were four literacy centers on Mahé. By 1981, thirty-two teachers had been trained and were in service. It is planned to enlarge the number of literacy centers to sixteen, which will accommodate 400 adult learners. In addition to the literacy and numeracy programs, the Adult Education Section offers special language courses in Russian, Spanish, and French. Basic Kreol courses for foreigners are also available. Other non-language related courses are offered as well.

In addition to the Kreol and Adult Literacy Sections, the Department of Education has separate language sections developing programs in English, Remedial English, and French. There are two curriculum developers/teachers in the English Section, two in the Remedial English Section, and one in the French Section. They are aided by a complement of typing and graphics personnel. Each section offers courses in methodology, literature, and the language itself. The precedence placed on English as the nation's second language, as well as the emphasis on language study in general, has caused the Ministry of Education to re-evaluate and redesign the English curriculum, based on the introduction of English in the second grade, and how soon transfer from Kreol to English in all grades can be accomplished.[9]

The English Section has been developing its own texts for grades P2 through P6, called Read and Understand. Grades P7 through P9 will have a text entitled Read and Answer. At present, the only compulsory text is A Graded Secondary School English Course.[10] Other texts are used at the option of the individual teacher. Most texts were previously imported from the United Kingdom, but this policy will cease when the Seychelles texts are ready. Teachers are required to design their own tests, although two standardized tests are given. An optional "Reading Test" is given at the conclusion of the sixth grade at the discretion of the English Section. A compulsory "Attainment Test" is given after the ninth grade. Methodology is based on what is termed a "Communicative Approach," stressing "English as speech," with reading and writing to come after spoken mastery of the material. All this

material "can be taught by direct association of all the words with objects, actions, and qualities."[11] Although many patters drills are utilized, a methodology based on audio-lingual skills is refuted by the Ministry. More emphasis is placed on "doing activities," i.e., "Where is your pencil? Put it on your desk. Put it on front of your book. What color is the pencil?"

The remedial English program was prompted by poor results on the "Attainment Test" after P9. The language meeting held in August, 1981, which defined language priorities and curriculum needs based on these priorities, addressed the remedial problem in terms of "special steps" which would "ensure that present P9 students become literate (in English) before entering NYS."[12] Meetings with headteachers at all levels revealed the need for remedial English much earlier than P9. The courses were begun in the third grade with books and materials developed for the Caribbean area.[13] From the fifth grade, texts developed in Mauritius were used. Both types were found unsuited to Seychelles culture. The Section changed to three texts which were produced in 1980 by the English Section, and uses these texts in grades three to six.[14] The Section is now in the process of developing its own texts for grades seven through nine. Tapes and cassette recordings are utilized in the upper level classes to implement the texts. The BBC series, "Pedagogical Pop," which makes use of popular songs as a focal point of grammatical structures and idioms, is a main feature of the tape program. To equate course work with pupil ability, the Section has embarked on a system of "streaming" pupils. There are three different streams of coursework. The first type focuses on the ten lowest achievers in each class. The second incorporates the whole class for remedial work in all subjects. This is done in graduating P9 classes. The third stream is based on an entire class, but treats only the weakness in English. The whole curriculum of these classes is on a slower schedule.

The French Section is modelled after the English Section, but is not as large. Although French is considered the third language of the country after Kreol and English, less effort is expended in this section. Texts relevant to Seychelles life are being developed, as well as methodology courses for teachers.

There is no remedial program in this language.

Since January, 1981, the Institut Pédagogique National has been in charge of teacher preparation and training at all levels, as well as pedagogical research. Their present program lasts three years and leads to a teaching certificate. Emphasis is placed on the training of teachers of grades P7 through P9 in English, French, Science, Mathematics, History, and Geography. Beginning in January, 1983, the three-year sequence will contain two years of "Language Betterment," and one year of professional training including methods and practical in-class experience. The "Language Betterment" training will attempt to improve teachers' competence in the English language. In-service training is also offered to teachers of grades P2 through P9. Following a pre-teaching course at IPN, the teachers take specialized workshop courses in English methodology in lieu of courses for the other specialties. Within the in-service program, a pilot study attempted to train "Supply Teachers," i.e., full-time teachers who do not have pedagogical training nor teaching certificate. These teachers trained two hours per week. The program included six to seven hours of intensive English, six hours of French, six hours of mathematics, and two hours of classroom management and teacher-pupil relationship. The program was offered during the Easter vacation of 1981. Unfortunately, it was offered only that once and not repeated. In-service training now takes the form of one- and two-week courses, and some one-day seminars. Most training seminars are held during the six-week vacation period in December.

Because of the commitment of the government to concentrate on the development of programs in languages, the IPN is also involved in research in this field. Special concentration is given to the development of classroom and teacher materials utilizing modern audio-visual techniques. Linguistic research into the structure of Seychellois Kreol is also undertaken. The IPN and the various sections, i.e., Kreol, English, Remedial, French, and Adult Education all contribute to the research, methodology, curriculum development and teacher training. All work is integrated so that there is no doubling of efforts.

Notes

[1]Interview with M. J. Hodoul, The Nation, July 21, 1977.

[2]Reported in Vinesh Y. Hookoomsingh, "Le Créole à l'école Seychelloise," L'Express, Port Louis, February 23, 1892.

[3]In 1967.

[4]See Chapter II, page 19f.

[5]An example is the creation of the word 'portlavwa,' (loudspeaker) based on the canonical form of Kreol, which is either CV or VC. English /lawdspiykər/ is rejected due to the /-dsp-/ cluster. French 'hautparleur' can be rendered /oparler/, but Kreol speakers prefer to use 'portvwa,' /porvwa/, a word of local Kreol origin. The standard Kreol form, as derived by the Kreol Section of the Ministry of Education, will be 'portlavwa,' the 'la' being a morphemic part of the Kreol nounal system.

[6]Université René Decartes is also involved in research in the Creole program in Haiti.

[7]See James J. Asher and B. S. Price, "The Learning Strategy of the Total Physical Response: Some Age Differences," Child Development, 38 (1967), pp. 1220-1227.

[8]This approach is used to teach adult functional literacy in the United States and in The Gambia. See Edmun B. Richmond, "The Development of a National Literacy Program: The Gambia Project," Language Problems and Language Planning, 6,2 (1982), pp. 154-165.

[9]These policies and goals, known as the "Optimalization Problem," were stated in the minutes of the Ministry's Language meeting of August, 1981, and again in a memo to the Director, National Institute of Pedagogy, February, 1982.

[10]A. R. B. Etherton and G. C. Thornley, Longman Group, 1963.

[11]Introduction of teacher's manual for English,

untitled manuscript, p. 2.

[12]Page 2.

[13]W. Murray, Lucky Dip, Loughborough: Ladybird Books, 1974, A series of six texts.

[14]My First Book; Learning Together; and Look and Learn, all produced by the English Section, Ministry of Education and Information, 1980.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

The present monograph has described the language education policies and programs of three nations in the Indian Ocean. It has pointed out their ethnic, historical, and linguistic similarities, as well as their individual problem areas and their attempts to solve them. Of the three nations, the Comoros is probably the most "African," primarily due to its proximity to the east coast of that continent, its Islamic culture, and its Swahili-related language. It is also a francophone nation, and still maintains economic and other cooperative ties with its ex-colonial power and other francophone countries on the continent. Mauritians and Seychellois, however, do not consider themselves as Africans, rather, they belong to an "Indian Ocean Community." This is understandably due to their distances from the continent, but also since such a great number of their population are descendants of the area of the Indian sub-continent. Mauritius and Seychelles are further linked through their history as being ex-colonies of both France and Great Britain, as well as through the similarities of their French-based creole language.[1]

All three of the countries have statements in their constitutions regarding the status of official and/or national languages. In the Comoros, French and Arabic are the official languages. This policy is not expected to change in the near future, although many members of the educational community would like to see Comorien attain recognition as a national language. However, this will not come about until a thorough study of the language has been completed, its history, structure, and lexicon have been described, and an orthography for the language has been established. This should, by all means, be accomplished. With the establishment of such an orthography, a program in adult functional literacy, as well as a primary education program can be developed for the public schools. This policy of using local languages in the first three years of primary education has become standard practice in many Third World nations.[2] In Mauritius, English has remained the only official language in spite of the presence of eight other languages which are spoken by the various segments of the population. English has remained the official

language more by default than by choice. Because of the various cultural factions, the choice to give national or official status to one Mauritian language over the others would result in vehement opposition by those factions who speak the other languages, and who would perceive this as linguistic and cultural prejudice of the highest order. English, however, remains in a neutral position of not being spoken as a mother tongue. It is therefore the least objectionable. The present impetus to elevate Mauritian Creole, or Mauricien, to national language status is hampered by affective perceptions of the general populus who believe that Creole is not a real language and is spoken only by uneducated lower class people. An awareness program such as that used in the Seychelles, to sensitize the public as to the legitamacy of Creole will help minimize these affective perceptions. The Seychelles Republic is in an enviable position among the developing nations of the world. Although the country has peoples of various backgrounds, it is devoid of the language problems which seem to always accompany a large cultural diversity. Kreol is the predominant language. By recognizing Kreol as the prime national language, the leaders of the country have instituted the best possible means for assuring the terminal objectives of their educational policy. But not only that. They have implemented the policy in the primary schools in a working program, and are going ahead in educating their people, both at the public school level, and at the adult level, through their functional literacy program. Another outstanding feature of the Seychelles program is the government's commitment to language study. The realization that language is the means by which humans input information about the world around them, as well as the means by which they develop strategies for solving problems, is of major importance in the educative process. The educational leaders in Mauritius are watching the Seychelles Kreol program with great interest, and at the same time, observing the results of the Creole program in primary education in Haiti, in the hope that these programs might point the way to solving educational problems in Mauritius.

Unfortunately, Mauritius will continue to have difficulties in resolving its language conflicts, due to its many ethno-linguistic groups, which do not appear ready or willing to make concessions in

language policy for the sake of national unity. The question of national language status for French-based Mauricien immediately will be countered with the question of equal status for Indian-based Bhojpuri. Although Bhojpuri is spoken by a smaller number of speakers, it is the first language of a substantial segment of the population.[3] Mauritian language planners are going to have to make a decision reasonably soon, not only regarding the status of Mauricien, but also with respect to the other languages spoken in the country. Without a policy on official and national languages, education cannot proceed efficiently. This is born out in Mauritius right now. The child comes to school speaking Creole, and studies English, French, and an Oriental language. At the end of the school day, the child leaves those languages at school, returns to his family and friendship circles, and speaks Creole again. Since Creole permeates every aspect of Mauritian life, it should receive the status of national language, and be used as the language of instruction for the first three years of primary school. English will most likely remain as the official language, due to its neutral position, but also due to its posture as a world language. To alleviate conflicts and jealousies, all other languages in Mauritius could be termed "insular," or "local languages," and could be so named in any governmental statement on language policy. A statement in the Constitution presented in the form, "The local languages of Mauritius are: French, Gujerati, Hindi, Mandarin, Marathi, Tamil, Telegu, and Urdu," would go a long way to placate the various cultural entities by recognizing their rights to follow the languages and customs of their forefathers. All of these languages could be offered as elective subjects in secondary school, allowing study of them by those who wish to do so. The place of Bhojpuri will also have to be determined. Perhaps it could be a national language, along with Mauricien. However, since virtually everyone speaks Mauricien as a first or second language, it, and it alone, should be utilized as the language of primary school instruction. The use of both creoles as languages of instruction would create too much confusion and duplication of efforts in terms of curriculum, materials, and teacher training. The use of one primary instructional language could be accomplished with little difficulty, since Mauritius is a small country. A larger country with so many languages

would probably have to deal with more than one language of instruction in the primary grades. If the terminal objective of all these language decisions is "nation building," the decisions must be made soon, because there is no nation building without education, and education and knowledge are transferred to others through the vehicle of language.

The Mauritius College of the Air is an outstanding example of the type of language program which can be offered to reach a large target population through the use of radio and television broadcasts. Although there does not appear to be any experimental evidence that the programs are producing better speakers of English, as indicated by the results of standardized texts given to students enrolled in MCA courses, versus students enrolled in other English courses, the programs certainly are a success from a motivational and participational standpoint. Since there are no school credits given for these courses, it is precisely the motivational component of the programs that provides positive results, from the point of view of the learner, as expressed on end-of-course questionnaires. Motivation, itself, is an extremely important variable in foreign language study. Research in this area demonstrates a high correlation between motivation and positive learning results.[4] The course and materials are the core of the program, and are excellently produced and sequenced to include new material as well as reentry of previously learned material. Another factor in the program's success is the detail given to teacher preparation. This is highly important when using classroom personnel who are not trained and qualified teachers. Advanced seminars, program scripts, and answer sheets allow the class to proceed efficiently for maximum learning. It is a shame that the Ministry of Education decided to cancel support of the classroom use of MCA due to prohibitive costs. Educational radio in Third World nations is, in reality, a very cost-effective way to reach the largest number of an otherwise inaccessible national population.[5]

The Comoros decision to advance the study of English in terms of increasing the number of classroom hours per week, as well as to offer specialized teacher training in that area parallels recent decisions made in other francophone African countries.

Large English programs in Senegal, Gabon, Rwanda, and Burundi, attest to the realization that competence in English is a necessity for economic, technological, and educative advancement in today's world.[6] Special courses are being envisaged for Comoran government officials and civil servants. However, the lack of English materials and publications in the islands, and the lack of money to purchase them in large quantities, will only delay the presentation of such courses. The concept of teaching functional and communicative skills as terminal objectives for the English program in the school system is very realistic for a nation in which three other languages play a role in daily life. Occupational, administrative, and business needs will demand more rigorous programs and specialized courses, but such courses will not be needed by the general public, who, by and large, will have little contact with English speakers. Furthermore, the objective of functional skills coincides with terminal skills for adult literacy programs. Once a literacy program is established in Comorien, transfer to an adult program in either English or French would be that much easier to fulfill due to familiar requirements of the program already studied. Such functional programs in all languages spoken in the Comoros can only aid in the education of the general public.

Professional preparation and curriculum development are part and parcel of each country's pedagogical advancement. Local textbook production is a necessity because of the lack of money for texts from Europe and America. But that is only part of the problem. Textbooks produced in Europe or the United States are geared to the way of life and culture of those particular societies. Consequently, the texts and materials have little relevance to life in the Indian Ocean. This is the main reason why so many Third World nations are developing and producing their own materials which are culturally specific to their societies. The materials now being developed in Mauritius and Seychelles focus specifically on life in those countries. Since one task of education is to teach children how to function within a particular society, such texts are an absolute necessity. Both Mauritius and Seychelles have demonstrated great ingenuity in developing and producing materials in locally constructed print shops and audio studios. The use of radio and television for education is now

available (for the time being only in Mauritius) but still in its infancy. The English-by-television series in Mauritius were first attempts. In time, such educational broadcasts will be commonplace. Many homes on the island are equipped with television receivers. Stations are not only received locally, but also from Réunion Island, 380 miles to the west. These programs are beamed by microwave relay to Mauritius across that expanse of ocean. Cooperative educational broadcasts between the two islands would seem to be a strong possibility in the future. Both the French government on Réunion and the Mauritius government would do well to investigate these possibilities and allocate funds to expand such inter-island broadcasting networks.

Teacher training is accomplished in two ways. One is to offer in-service workshops, seminars, and courses either after school hours or during breaks and holidays. This is the usual and most expeditious system presently in use within the Third World, since it allows teachers to continue their training and education while remaining on the job in the classroom. Such double-duty is important to a country where funds are limited. Longer training programs for both beginning teachers and those who have taught for several years is best accomplished through the two or three year full-time programs, such as are being initiated in all three nations. These short-run and long-run programs will help fill the shortage of teachers, but it will take several years of government support. The program in the Comoros is just beginning. The Mauritius and Seychelles programs are well under way. The Mauritius program is still limited by the absence of an established national language policy, but contingency plans to teach Mauricien in the public schools are nevertheless being prepared for the day that it becomes the national language. The Seychelles teaching program is changing over to meet the needs of the decision to incorporate Kreol as the national language into its curriculum.

Of all the problems and difficulties facing education in Africa, the most pressing problem has always been, and still remains, the professional preparation and training of an adequate number of teachers to meet the needs of each country. This lone fact has been recognized for many years, but little

has been done to rectify the situation. In the past, teacher training has not been a high priority item in national budgetry. African leaders are aware of the situation, but are slow to allocate funds and develop national programs to alleviate the problem. Gradually, African educators are formulating small training programs in specialized areas, such as languages. This is a wise decision. Smaller training programs, when organized and executed efficiently can demonstrate to government leaders that such programs are not only cost-effective, but can be produced locally without involving the depletion of the national treasury. Such programs should be supported at the beginning by the international monetary lending organizations as well as member countries of the industrialized world. Too many times, African nations have depended on external financial support for such programs which do not always produce the expected results. Cooperation between industrial nations and developing nations is a necessity, but eventually, and rightfully so, the developing nations are going to have to assume full responsibility for their own destiny. Training their own teachers will help them realize that goal.

Notes

[1]For a discussion of the similarities of French Creoles, see Morris F. Goodman, A Comparative Study of Creole French Dialects, The Hague: Mouton, 1964, pp. 129-133.

[2]Discussed in UNESCO (ED/217), World Conference of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy: Final Report, Paris: UNESCO, 1965; Christina Bratt Paulson, Implications of Language Learning Theory for Language Planning; Concerns in Bilingual Education, Washington: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1974; and Edmun B. Richmond, New Directions in Language Teaching in Sub-Saharan Africa, Lanham: University Press of America, 1983.

[3]The MIE is planning a linguistic description of Bhojpuri and its relation to Mauricien. Thus far, few studies of Bhojpuri have been attempted. See Philip Baker, "The Language Stiuation in Mauritius with Special Reference to Mauritian Creole," African Language Review, 8 (1969), pp. 73-97.

[4]Much has been written on the subject. For an overview, see Charles R. Hancock, "Student Aptitude, Attitude, and Motivation," in Dale L. Lange and Charles J. James, eds., Foreign Language Education: A Reappraisal, the ACTFL Review of Foreign Language Education Series, Number 4, Skokie: National Textbook Company, 1972.

[5]See Richard C. Burke, The Use of Radio in Adult Literacy Education, Amersham: Hulton Educational Publications, 1976.

[6]This subject is discussed in Edmun B. Richmond, New Directions in Language Teaching in Sub-Saharan Africa, Lanham: University Press of America, 1983.

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